

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TAGS: ECON, ETRD, ETRN, OECD

SUBJECT: TRADE PLEDGE: FRENCH EXPORT PROMOTION MEASURES
AND U.S. OIL CARGO PREFERENCE LEGISLATION

REFS: (A) STATE 165468

(B) USOECD 18001

1. AT COUNCIL MEETING AUGUST 1, UK REP (HUTCHINSON)
FOLLOWED UP INTERVENTION AT PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 23 (REF B) BY NOTING IMPORTANCE OF MINISTERIAL
TRADE PLEDGE AND RISK THAT COUNTRIES INTRODUCING EXPORT
PROMOTION MEASURES (READ FRANCE), OR SEEKING TO
IMPROVE THEIR INVISIBLES BALANCE (READ U.S.), MIGHT
ENCOURAGE RECIPROCAL ACTION BY OTHERS. SHE CONCLUDED
THAT ANY MEASURES WHICH ARE POTENTIALLY NOT IN ACCORDANCE
WITH TRADE PLEDGE SHOULD BE EXAMINED BY APPROPRIATE OECD
COMMITTEES, AND SHE REITERATED VIEW THAT FRENCH EXPORT
PROMOTION MEASURES JUSTIFIED FURTHER EXAMINATION BY
TRADE COMMITTEE WORKING PARTY OR SOME OTHER COMMITTEE.
FRENCH REP PROMISED TO INFORM HIS AUTHORITIES OF UK
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VIEWS AND REPORT BACK TO COUNCIL.

2. UK REP'S PASSING REFERENCE TO "MEASURES INTENDED TO IMPROVE INVISIBLE BALANCE" DID NOT ACTUALLY SPECIFY U.S. BY NAME OR MENTION OIL CARGO PREFERENCE LEGISLATION. HOWEVER, IN DISCUSSION WITH MISSION OFFICERS PRIOR TO COUNCIL MEETING, UK REPS MADE CLEAR THEIR VIEW THAT LEGISLATION NOW BEFORE SENATE MIGHT BE CONSIDERED CONTRARY TO TRADE PLEDGE. MISSION EXPRESSED VIEW THAT SUCH CONCERN MIGHT BETTER BE EXPRESSED IN BILATERAL CHANNELS, RATHER THAN IN COUNCIL, SINCE LEGISLATION HAS NOT YET PASSED SENATE AND OUTCOME REMAINS UNCLEAR. UK REP SUBSEQUENTLY TONED DOWN INTERVENTION IN COUNCIL AND LIMITED HER RAMRKS TO THOSE REPORTED PARA 1 ABOVE.

3. COMMENT: JUDGING FROM BRITISH CONCERN AND FROM DEMARCHE THIS SUBJECT BY OTHER OECD COUNTRY EMBASSIES IN WASHINGTON, PASSAGE OF OIL CARGO PREFERENCE LEGISLATION MIGHT WELL STIMULATE FURTHER INTEREST IN OECD (FOLLOWING AUGUST BREAK) AND POSSIBLY LEAD TO REQUESTS FOR CONSULTATION UNDER PROVISIONS OF TRADE PLEDGE.

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